

## THE FUNGUS-GROWING ANT ON LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK.

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In the last edition of the List of New Jersey Insects Prof. Wm. Morton Wheeler has this to say of the ant *Atta septentrionalis* McCook: "Practically confined to the pine regions and is the northern extremity of the range of this 'cutting ant.' It is the only one of the fungus-growing ants whose range extends into the state, and its life cycle is of extreme interest." Among the localities mentioned the most northern are Manasquan and Milltown, where I found colonies of the ant on September 23, 1906, and September 29, 1906, respectively. These localities are south of the Raritan River, but on August 19, 1909, the ant was found to the north of the river at Bonhamtown, where I was collecting insects with Dr. Frank E. Lutz.

In his paper on "The Fungus-Growing Ants of North America," Bulletin Am. Museum of Natural History, Vol. XXIII, 1907, p. 747, Prof. Wheeler comments on the fact that this ant had not been found on Staten Island, N. Y., and adds that "it may yet be found in certain parts of Long Island." This prophecy was fulfilled on June 1, 1913, when I found *Atta septentrionalis* resident on the warm slope of the hill among the scattered trees near the hotel at Wading River. There were a considerable number of nests and they appeared to be quite as strong and well populated as those found in New Jersey. The ants in many instances were engaged in bringing home for use in their fungus gardens the excrement of the then common caterpillars of *Alsophila pometaria*. I also saw some with pieces of the green leaves that the caterpillars had let fall in their promiscuous eating of the foliage of nearly every kind of deciduous tree in the vicinity.

A second visit was made to Wading River in the latter part of June. The ants were not at work above ground in the hot sun on the 24th but later in the day they came from their nests. On the three following days their nests were found on several of the adjoining hills that form part of the range extending along the north shore of

Long Island, but none could be discovered among the pines and oaks on the slopes about Deep Pond out on the level country to the south of Wading River. The ants invariably had their nests in protected places on the hills, where the ground was somewhat barren, such as openings in the woods with sheltering trees and thickets to the north. On these hills grow a few pitch pines and red cedars, but the trees are nearly all deciduous, and the environment does not suggest the sites commonly selected for nest building by *Atta septentrionalis* at Lakehurst and elsewhere in the pine barrens of New Jersey.

The finding of the fungus-growing ant at Wading River, N. Y., extends its known range considerably, and adds one more species to the fauna of the state. While the nearest reported colonies are in New Jersey about one hundred miles to the southwest, it may be safely predicted that some connecting colonies will be found in the future.

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## JOHN ABBOT, OF GEORGIA.

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When John Francillon, silversmith, of the Strand, London, was engaged in making a notable collection of insects, mostly lepidoptera, for twenty years or more from about 1790, and, as was customary among the leading collectors, made a business of selling his duplicates, he offered among other things many unusually fine specimens from the "Province of Georgia, in North America." These, if they were lepidoptera or of other prominently winged orders, were pinned and expanded with a degree of skill which commanded the admiration of the ablest of the Aurelians, by which name the English butterfly collector has been known since a number of them formed the Aurelian Club, with Moses Harris at the Swan Tavern in 1745.<sup>1</sup> Georgia was then far more inaccessible to an Englishman than Java or Cape of Good Hope. Moreover, the prices were very reasonable—

<sup>1</sup> The original Moses Harris is not to be confused with his famous nephew of the same name, the copper-plate engraver, who published the *Aurelian* and other works, drew the plates for Drury's masterpiece, and was secretary of the second Aurelian Club, 1762-66.